

Mr Phillip Reese  
Dorset Council  
Planning and Community Services  
South Walks House  
South Walks Road  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT1 1UZ

**Our ref:** WX/2019/133651/OR-  
02/IS1-L01  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 19 March 2020

Dear Mr Reese

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above Neighbourhood Plan. I am responding on behalf of my colleague, Michael Holm.

We aim to reduce flood risk, whilst protecting and enhancing the water environment. We focus our detailed engagement where the environmental risks are greatest, therefore we offer the following advice on your Neighbourhood Plan.

Together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission we have published joint advice on neighbourhood planning which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans. This is available at: [Planning for the Environment at the Neighbourhood Level](#).

### **Flood Risk**

National and Local Plan Policy approach is to ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding from any source are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. The aim should be to keep development out of medium and high flood risk areas, and other areas affected by flooding.

We would remind you that Local planning authorities' [Strategic Flood Risk Assessments](#) (SFRAs) should be the primary source of flood risk information in considering whether particular neighbourhood planning areas may be appropriate for development. Other important sources include the [interactive maps of flood risk](#) available on the Environment Agency's web site. There may also be specific issues or local policies, e.g. a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy or Surface Water Management Plan, which should be considered when assessing and managing surface water matters. The Lead Local Flood Authority should be consulted regarding any potential flooding from surface waters.

### **Biodiversity**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature, and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.

Environment Agency  
Rivers House East Quay, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 4YS.

[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

Cont/d..

